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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Assistant Secretary-General Giandomenico Picco named head of United Nations delegation participating in talks with Iraq on its sale of oil for essential humanitarian purposes.

+ Secretary-General's Special Representative, Yasushi Akashi, arrives in Phnom Penh, marking beginning of deployment of United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia.

+ Administrative and Budgetary Committee takes up report by Secretary-General on financing of United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia, estimated at some $620 million for 12 months.

+ Preparatory Committee for Earth Summit discusses need to address debt problem of developing countries in environment-development context.

+ Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator reports some 300 people killed and 180,000 homeless in earthquake in Turkey.

+ Special Commissions on the Law of the Sea concludes spring session in Kingston approving programmes for summer session.

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Assistant Secretary-General Giandomenico Picco has been named head of the United Nations delegation participating in talks with Iraq concerning the sale of oil to meet essential humanitarian needs of that country's population. In an announcement this morning, the Secretary-General's Spokesman, François Giuliani, said Mr. Picco would replace Assistant Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who has been assigned other duties by the Secretary-General.

Representatives of the United Nations and Iraqi officials have been negotiating the conditions for Iraqi oil sale under Security Council resolution 706 (1991), which allows Iraq to sell oil worth of $1.6 billion to finance food and medicine to meet the humanitarian relief needs of Iraqi civilians.

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In January, Mr. Annan told correspondents that, since the adoption of the resolution, "not a single drop of oil had been sold" because of various points of conflict between the United Nations and Iraqi authorities. Following that, Iraq broke off a scheduled second round of talks on that issue, claiming the conditions imposed on Iraq by the United Nations were "unnecessary and obtrusive."

The President of the Security Council said in a statement in February, following its regular sixty-day review of the implementation of resolution 687 (1991), that, by cutting off the oil sale talks, Iraq bore "full responsibility" for the humanitarian problems of its people. However, Council Members expressed hope for a resumption of the talks and the early implementation of the scheme set out in its resolution.

The talks are expected to resume soon in Vienna.

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The deployment of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) -- the largest United Nations peace-keeping operation ever staged -- began officially yesterday with the arrival in the capital city of Phnom Penh of the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Cambodia, Yasushi Akashi, head of UNTAC.

In a statement to the press yesterday, Mr. Akashi said the first contingent of the military component of UNTAC had also arrived in the Cambodian capital and others would follow in the coming weeks. Accompanied by a number of senior officials, he said his presence in Phnom Penh marked the beginning of the deployment process.

Mr. Akashi went on to say that the parties to the Cambodian conflict were facing "a historic challenge" in trying to put an end to "two decades of war, destruction and intense suffering" and to create the conditions for a lasting peace and enable the Cambodian people to determine their destiny through free and fair elections. The role of UNTAC was to assist the Cambodian parties to meet this challenge. Mr. Akashi said he expected the parties to comply scrupulously with the Paris Agreements, signed by the four Cambodian parties last October, and to take all necessary measures to ensure the safety and security of all United Nations personnel.

The operation covers seven major areas which are: promotion of human rights, free and fair elections scheduled for spring 1993, military arrangements, civil administration, maintenance of law and order, repatriation of Cambodian refugees and displaced persons, and the rehabilitation of the infrastructure during the transitional period.

On 14 February, the General Assembly decided to appropriate an initial amount of $200 million to cover the start-up costs of UNTAC, pending the discussion and adoption of the overall budget of the Force.

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The General Assembly's Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary) met this morning to take up the Secretary-General's report on financing the United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR) for a period of 12 months, at an estimated gross cost of $620.5 million.

The related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), made public today, recommends that the Assembly appropriate $250 million, inclusive of the $10 million it previously authorized for the Force, and said the amount should be adequate until the Secretary-General submits additional requirements as may be necessary for the period beyond October 1992. At that time a detailed report on the performance of UNPROFOR should also be submitted. In its detailed assessment of the proposed cost estimates of the peace-keeping operation, the Committee also recommended specific cuts to reduce UNPROFOR's proposed costs, particularly in the area of premises, transportation, and services. And it pointed out that further savings could be achieved through voluntary contributions by Member States and other countries and by additional assistance and services by the parties.

In introducing the Secretary-General's report on UNPROFOR today, Under-Secretary-General Dick Thornburgh said that Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali was appealing to Member States to contribute to the UNPROFOR operation. To date, none had been received. He said the success of peace-keeping operations depended largely on Member States.

The representative of Japan, Tadanori Inomata, said that the ACABQ report represented a delicate balance of the views of Member States. In spite of the necessary haste in deploying UNPROFOR, he said, time must be made available to thoroughly examine the funding for such peace-keeping forces in the future.

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The need to address the debt problem of developing countries in the context of the environment and development negotiations was highlighted today, as the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) continued its meetings in New York.

The Minister for Rural Development and Agriculture of Guinea-Bissau, Mario Cabral, said that what had made the Rio Conference important was that for the first time, the problems of environment and development would be dealt with in conjunction. He pointed to two main problems which, he said, would be before the Conference: the need to change today's development model in developing countries to avoid a self-destruction process and to lay the foundation for future generations; and the need for all countries to take part in a joint definition of the rules of a sustainable economic and social development.

He said the ministers in charge of environmental affairs of seven Portuguese-speaking countries -- Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal and Sao Tome and Principe had met to consider suggestions for the drafting of the Earth Charter. Guinea Bissau supported the priorities

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put forward by African countries in the preparatory process which was aimed at finding a dialectic balance between conservation of the environment and the imperatives of development.

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The Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator (UNDRO) reported over the weekend that Turkey had been struck by an earthquake on Friday, 13 March, which had killed 310 people -- a temporary count that could rise to 800.

The Agency said it had immediately made available an emergency grant of $50,000 for humanitarian assistance to people left without shelter. Some 36,000 buildings had been destroyed, it said, and the homeless population numbered about 180,000.

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In Kingston, Jamaica, the Special Commissions on the Law of the Sea have concluded their work for the spring session and approved their programmes for the summer session.

The Special Commission on the mining code, during this session, discussed the mining code's draft accounting principles and procedures, as well as draft labour, health and safety standards. Those topics would be revised and presented to the summer session to be held in New York.

The Special Commission on the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, charged with making all practical arrangements for the establishment of the Tribunal, completed its consideration of the draft protocol on privileges and immunities of the Tribunal. Among matters to be considered at its summer session would be financial and administrative arrangements for the Tribunal, and the relationship agreement between the Tribunal and the United Nations.

The Preparatory Commission for the International Seabed Authority and for the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, completed its consideration of a draft headquarters agreement between the Authority and the Government of Jamaica, as well as a draft protocol on privileges and immunities of the Authority. Consideration of matters relating to the administrative arrangements, structure and financial implications of the International Seabed Authority had been deferred to the summer session.

Two other Commissions -- the Special Commission on the Enterprise, the mining arm of the Seabed Authority, and the Special Commission on land-based Producers also concluded their sessions and plan to meet again in the summer.

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